

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

4701 WILLARD AVENUE, CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815 656-4068

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM CBS Morning News

STATION WDVM-TV
CBS Network

DATE January 25, 1983 7:00 A.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Interview with Ralph McGehee

CONNIE CHUNG: The CIA is about to get another beating from a former agent who has written a book. This time it's called "Deadly Deceit." But its author, Ralph McGehee, is not your ordinary disgruntled spook with a grudge. He's not interested in telling secrets and blowing covers. And in talking with our John Sheahan, he made it clear that for years he acted no differently from the colleagues he is now criticizing.

JOHN SHEAHAN: It's clear that your hands were not exactly clean, either, that you provided the data. And on the basis of these data, alleged communist political organizers were ambushed and killed.

RALPH MCGEHEE: Yes.

SHEAHAN: How does that look to you now? How do you feel about that today?

MCGEHEE: I feel very badly.

SHEAHAN: For 25 years Ralph McGehee worked for the CIA. His specialty was ferreting out secret communist organizations in Southeast Asia. But McGehee, the superspy, is about to make himself an outcast in the cloak-and-dagger world. Next month he intends to publish a scathing book about his former employer, the Central Intelligence Agency.

MCGEHEE: The agency is not an intelligence agency. It's a covert action agency. And disinformation is a large part of its covert action charter. And the American people are the primary target audience of its lies.

OFFICES IN: WASHINGTON D.C. • NEW YORK • LOS ANGELES • CHICAGO • DETROIT • AND OTHER PRINCIPAL CITIES

Material supplied by Radio TV Reports, Inc. may be used for file and reference purposes only. It may not be reproduced, sold or publicly demonstrated or exhibited.

SHEAHAN: When CBS News contacted the CIA about McGehee's claims, an agency spokesman, as he put it, vehemently denied the former employee's allegation that the CIA attempts to mold American public opinion.

McGehee did submit his manuscript to the CIA for review, and the agency censored parts of it.

Among the growing number of ex-CIA officers who have written exposes, Ralph McGehee is an unlikely dissident, an honor student and avowed super-patriot recruited by the CIA just after college, a star tackle at Notre Dame, playing on Frank Leahy's legendary undefeated teams of the late '40s.

MCGEHEE: I would like to regain the pride I had in those days.

SHEAHAN: Far from being an anti-CIA firebrand, at retirement McGehee was awarded the prestigious Career Intelligence Medal.

MCGEHEE: I did not want the medal. I thought it was more a mark of shame than of pride.

SHEAHAN: As a covert American adviser to the governments of Thailand and Vietnam, he was highly decorated by foreign officials, whose identity he still keeps secret. Ralph McGehee is not interested in giving away secrets. His complaint, voiced, he says, to his superiors but never before in public, is that his intelligence reports were suppressed because they would have shown in 1967 that the communists had insurmountable public support in Vietnam.

MCGEHEE: The agency doesn't report any information that policymakers don't want to hear. Policymakers didn't want to hear that sort of information.

Of course, the Vietnam situation was a war brought to us by agency disinformation operations, completely and totally sold the war to us on false intelligence.

SHEAHAN: The CIA flatly denies McGehee's allegations.

Why didn't you quit?

MCGEHEE: I had four children, two in expensive colleges. If I quit, what could I -- what could I do?

SHEAHAN: Back when you were a dedicated CIA man, what would you think about a colleague who wrote a book like yours?

3

MCGEHEE: That he was traitorous.

SHEAHAN: John Sheahan, CBS News, Herndon, Virginia.